

Work Session

Agenda Item #	9
Meeting Date	September 12, 2005
Prepared By	Barbara B. Matthews
Approved By	

Discussion Item	Discussion of Community Center Use and Rental Policies
Background	<p>On May 26, 2005, a work session was held to discuss use and rental policies for the Community Center. The City Council agreed at that time that the guiding philosophy for use of the facility was community use based (i.e., the goal was to serve the Takoma Park community rather than to give priority to paying customers).</p> <p>As discussed during the work session on May 26, 2005, City-sponsored programs and classes and official City meetings will have priority for the use of the various meeting spaces.</p> <p>The City Council previously approved an hourly fee schedule for rental of the Community Center, the Takoma Park Recreation Center, and the Heffner Community Center. The approved fee schedule is as follows:</p> <p><u>Meeting/Conference Room</u> Resident \$20 Non-Resident \$35 Commercial \$55</p> <p><u>Multi-purpose Room/Theater</u> Resident \$30 Non-Resident \$45 Commercial \$65</p> <p>Exceptions to this fee schedule may be made for those organizations with formal partnership agreements with the City. Any such agreement would be formalized by the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the partnering agency/organization.</p> <p>As previously discussed and agreed upon by the City Council, certain activities will be prohibited in the Community Center. These activities include smoking, gambling, the serving of alcohol, the offering of fee-based classes deemed to be in conflict with City-offered programs, profit-motivated activities of a personal nature, and fundraising activities unless otherwise approved by the City Manager.</p> <p>In regard to the use and rental of the Community Center, the City Council had previously decided to provide nine free rentals per year to certain community groups. The City Manager was directed to develop a definition of a “community group” for consideration by the City Council.</p> <p>On July 25, 2005, the City Council discussed the City Manager’s proposed definition of a “community group.” The City Manager recommended that groups meeting the following criteria would be entitled to nine free room rentals per year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognized neighborhood, tenants, or condominium association on file with the Office of the City Clerk; or

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A true non-profit organization whose membership is comprised primarily of Takoma Park residents. The organization’s mission must directly benefit the City of Takoma Park or Takoma Park residents. Organizations would be required to provide the Recreation Department with a listing of its members as well as a statement of activities during the previous 12 months that benefited the City of Takoma Park or Takoma Park residents to assist the City in determining their eligibility for the nine free rentals per year. <p>The City Council accepted the aforementioned criteria. However, in discussing this matter, the City Council expressed a desire to broaden the definition of a “community group” to include certain organizations which are not formally structured as non-profit entities or whose members are not primarily composed of Takoma Park residents. The City Council requested that the City Manager review this matter and present a recommendation for its consideration.</p> <p>Based on staff’s research, the groups that used City facilities in the past generally fell into one of the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations to which the City provides financial support or with whom the City co-sponsors events/programs, such as the Takoma Park Jazz Festival Committee, the Takoma Park Film Festival Committee, the Takoma Park Folk Festival Committee, and the Takoma Park Independence Committee • Organizations that have provided financial support to the City or provide a direct public service to the Takoma Park community, such as Friends of the Library, the Takoma Horticulture Club, and the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department • Youth-oriented organizations with informal partnership arrangements with the City, such as Takoma Park Youth Soccer, Babe Ruth Baseball/Softball, Takoma Park Sports Camp, and Takoma Park Boys and Girls Club • Organizations that have historically met in one of the City facilities whose groups have various missions. Based on the information received by staff, their members are primarily non-Takoma Park residents. These groups include the Takoma Artists Guild, the Takoma Park Community Singers, the Takoma Park Community Band, and the Takoma Park Swing Band. <p>In recognition of the role that the aforementioned organizations have played in the community and/or their long-standing use of City facilities, staff recommends that they be afforded nine free room rentals per year. Those groups or organizations that require more than nine room rentals during a year may rent space in accordance with the fee structure previously approved by the City Council.</p>
Policy	<p>The City Council ultimately determines how the use and rental of the Community Center will be handled.</p> <p>In developing policies for the City Council’s consideration, staff recognizes that there will be considerable demand for space from new users. The recommended policies and procedures have been designed to accommodate both previous as well as new users of the facility.</p>

Fiscal Impact	Will depend on the definition of community group as it pertains to the eligibility for nine free rentals of Community Center space. The more broadly this term is defined, the less revenue will be generated from room rentals.
Attachments	None
Recommendation	Staff recommends that the City Council consider the City Manager's supplemental recommendation concerning the eligibility of certain groups for nine free room rentals of Community Center space and provide direction to staff.
Special Consideration	As recommended by staff and agreed upon the City Council, all policies and procedures will be re-evaluated after the Community Center has been in operation for one year.